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THE ELUSIVE QUEST FOR SMALL STATES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: SECURITY AND THE PACIFIC ISLAND NATION-STATES

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Size is an important factor underlying variations in the international behavior of nation-states; small states as a class tend to differ from large states in their foreign policy behavior. (East 1973:556)

The truth probably is that the world community has not yet thought its way through the phenomenon of very small states in the world that is emerging in the end years of the twentieth century ... Can the world proceed any longer on the old assumptions that underpinned the concept of the nation-state? (Harden 1985:5)

The end of the Cold War and the promise of a new world order has been met with a collective sigh of relief by many Pacific Island leaders. For in improved East-West relations they see the emergence of a new world order where they will no longer be shackled to a world view shaped largely by the strategic perceptions of other powers who have tended to view the islands, if not as stepping stones to somewhere else, then as a possible venue for superpower confrontation. Indeed, superpower rivalry was the prism through which the dominant ANZUS powers have tended to view the region. Cold War rhetoric, and the various pressures exerted by metropolitan powers on island leaders to conform to the 'central balance', shaped the strategic perceptions of many. It also limited their international choices. (Sanday 1991:35)

There are several features of interest in these statements. First, that the concept of security by its purely military definition seems scarcely applicable anymore to the Pacific Islands. Second, there is the clear implication that the fact of smallness inclines small states towards a particular type of foreign policy with regard to the international community. The depiction of the security of small states, specifically Pacific Island nation-states, as resting primarily

on external or indigenous 'security forces' is common practice among analysts and policy-makers. The second belief, that smallness produces particular foreign policy traits and security requirements for small states, is also shared among analysts and policy-makers.

In a wider context, the International Relations literature on small states is in need of some sorting out and comparative analysis. This paper will try to show theoretically and empirically why the concept of small state, as it has been employed in the past, cannot be developed for theoretical purposes. Explanations for small state foreign policy and security will be examined beyond the variable of size to incorporate such other factors across different levels of analysis as personality characteristics of individual decision-makers, internal political structures, geopolitical environments, and issue sensitivity. The theme unifying this work is that while the size of a state can be used to describe an actor in international relations as small, the concept of the small state lacks explanatory content and theoretical utility.

Definitional Difficulties in the Literature

How one looks at the world globally influences the importance one attributes to particular places (Kirby 1987; Cohen 1990). Most of the literature on foreign policy behavior is built around the actions, interests and policies of the major powers (Pepper 1985; Gray 1988; Sloan 1988). Yet by statistical definitions major powers are in the minority. Statements which may be valid with respect to major powers may have declining relevance for others. The United States is as far removed from the 'average' state in most important dimensions as is Papua New Guinea; indeed statistically, Papua New Guinea is much closer to the 'average' state. International Relations literature may be power-centric, but it clearly is *not* state-centric until such time as it puts the average state at the center of its concerns.

The conventional approach towards small states is that they are large states writ small: they pursue similar interests by similar means, but with appropriate modifications to reflect their relatively fewer resources and power disparities with major actors. An alternative is to take as a point of departure the assumption that small state behavior is qualitatively different, with its own characteristic mode of functioning and techniques of statecraft. The international states-system cannot be regarded as homogeneous, and assuming the behavior patterns of the larger states to be characteristic of all states ignores the very pronounced skewness in distribution of the major variables differentiating states from one another (e.g. military expenditure, number under arms, population, contributions to United Nations budget, official development assistance, GNP, and land area).

The literature on small states also suffers from another weakness. This weakness is the hegemonic position of Anglo-American scholarship in the field of International Relations theory (as noted by Holsti 1985). Representatives of this branch of scholarship tend to approach the small state from the point of view of smallness being a problem. The 'small state paradox' (Amstrup 1976:169) is one of viability: how, given smallness, have the small

states survived and indeed proliferated? The assumption behind the small state-as-a-problem approach, whether explicit or tacit, is that of realism: in an anarchical world of power-maximizing actors (Bull 1977), how can the small state remain viable? Yet already the focus has been broadened from a consideration simply of size. The problem is now one of viability in a hostile environment with both a structural element (international anarchy), and a characteristic pattern of behavior (power maximization). Thus the theoretical notion of *environment* has been introduced, and the problem has been transformed into one of unit *adaptation* to its environment. Viability now becomes a function of adaptive skills of a given unit within its particular environment.

This in turn leads to a another difficulty for students interested in examining South Pacific foreign policies as examples of small state behavior. Some of the best theoretical and empirical work on small states has been done by Europeans and/or on European small states, in particular Austria, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries (Vital 1967 & 1971). Yet the historical and environmental differences between Europe and the Pacific are so profound that, on the face of it, the applicability of 'Euro-derived' propositions to the Pacific Island nation-states seems to be suspect. (The mean GNP and population of 25 European countries is $230.1 billion and 30.8 million; of the fifteen members of the South Pacific Forum, 1.3 billion and 1.7 million.) The historical experience of the European small states is that their security is a function of the balance of power among the European great powers, a phenomenon that is largely irrelevant to the Pacific Island nation-states. The European states also have a much longer history as independent states; Pacific Island nation-states have only just recently assumed responsibility for the conduct of their foreign affairs, as the hierarchical structure of imperial authority has fragmented into the fully developed states-system.

The European small states are part of the European mainstream in political culture and race; the Pacific include a considerable diversity of political traditions among Micronesian, Melanesian, Polynesian and European peoples. Some of the Pacific Island nation-

states are former colonies, and present security wards, of Australia, New Zealand and the United States; no European small state faces this peculiar relationship with another European country. The unit of Pacific Islands international relations is 'microstatic', resource poor, with a simple economy, and restricted educational and employment opportunities; this combination creates a particular problem of emigration for employment and study. The European states occupy a frontier or buffer position in the strategic environment of the superpowers; the Pacific Islands are as far removed from the theaters of superpower conflict as possible on this earth. This exerts both a causal and a facilitative influence on the distinctive international roles played by the European small states in the tertiary sector of international relations (international peacekeeping, negotiation and conference venues, etc.).

A final difficulty for students of small state behavior is that the existing literature is overly concerned with the independent variable of smallness, to the neglect of the dependent variable of the behavior of small states. Yet even with regard to the independent variable, there is no consensus among theorist on the conceptual meaning of smallness or on how to operationalize a small state. The scales of magnitude employed to determine 'smallness' or 'bigness' will always seem arbitrary. Most use population as the determining criterion, but the ceiling of a small state ranges from 500,000 to 25 million (Henderson 1984:254-253). Nor do different dimensions of size correlate very well: nations are notably rank-disequiliberated (ranking high on some dimensions and low on others). No satisfactory or generally accepted formula exists for aggregating the several dimensions of statehood into one conceptual whole.

Because size, like power, is relational, it becomes a comparative rather than an absolute criterion; it becomes in part a perceptual phenomenon too, not simply an objective one. Smallness is a psychological criterion also in the sense that decision-makers can use it as a legitimating argument for a policy that they favor. Not surprisingly, the theme of Pacific Island nation-states as small states recurs in the literature, although not with any degree of rigor or

sophistication in regard to conceptual definition or theoretical propositions.

'Small' can easily be confused with 'weak', especially if the concept is analyzed from the perspective of traditional power theory (Rothstein 1977). But this makes propositions about small-state behavior redundant. Large states can also be weak, due to internal factors such as weak institutional structure, lack of a strong sense of nationhood, the existence of unassimilated ethnic minorities, or poorly defined borders. This can be seen in the Soviet Union of yesterday, where many of these factors challenged the power of a large state and brought about its demise. Conversely, a very small state with widely shared values among its people, firmly based institutions, and long recognized borders, can be viewed as a powerful state. Switzerland is often cited as a small state where many of these factors make it powerful (Handel 1981). It is also worth recalling that the small state was the 'normal' state until the mid-19th century -- the norm changed with the unification of Germany and Italy and the increased size and power of older European nation-states. (England and France were exceptions.) Today's normative definition posits the state as one 'large enough to generate substantial economic and political self-sufficiency and to sustain a serious national purpose' (Lowenthal 1987:28).

So essentially any statement about size-based behavior of small states could be refuted with at least one contrary empirical example. General propositions about small states could be rescued only with recourse to qualifications, modifications and auxiliary and *ad hoc* hypotheses. But this in turn would make a theory of small states cumbersome, with to many variables, and restrictive in its applicability to particular cases. It can be argued that this is the opposite of a good theory, which aims to be 'parsimonious, elegant and comprehensive' (Rosenau 1966)

The Pacific Islands Security Problem?

It is not difficult to identify the moment when the view of small states being a problem within the international states-system achieved a prominent position in world affairs. In October 1983, the island of Grenada in the eastern Caribbean was invaded by armed forces of the United States. The action constituted the world's first military invasion of a small island state. Grenada was an island with a mere 110,000 inhabitants, whose best known export was nutmeg: and yet one of the world's largest military states had deemed it imperative to invade. The whole episode to many presented a new dimension to the international states-system. Now scholars and policy-makers saw small island states as a new challenge to the game of international power-politics of larger states.

The logic of the new thinking about small states was reinforced by the already established assumptions about such states in the International Relations literature as being particularly vulnerable, dependent, and resourceless (Benedict 1967; Selwyn 1975; Connell 1988). These economic characteristics were linked to an assumed security characteristic -- a lack of resources to deal with security threats of even a minor nature (Wolfers 1962). It was further assumed that this combination makes these countries particularly vulnerable to the actions of outside interest seeking to manipulate internal politics (Maniruzzman 1982:72-75). The conclusion is that the possible instability flowing from this situation could significantly affect regional security and even 'the central balance' (Quester 1983:160-175). In its most dramatic form the new thinking portrayed microstates simply as 'dangerous' (Harden 1985); in its more moderate form as particularly prone to instability. This was the first time that small states as a group had been given a security personality or regarded as a security category (Espindola 1987). The model was clearly one suggested by the Grenada experience. This experience was generalized to include all small island states whether in the Indian Ocean, the Caribbean or the Pacific.

The new thinking not only characterized the potential security problems posed by small states; it also considered the need for

management of those problems. The management was to be carried out by those larger powers which had the security resources required to assist but would be done under the auspices and with the cooperation of small states themselves, organized regionally. Again it was the Grenada model writ large. The new thinking was particularly evident in Commonwealth circles and was proliferating throughout the academic security literature (Diggines 1986:191-205). It had a direct and immediate impact on Pacific Island nation-states because the Commonwealth Secretariat organized a security colloquium in late 1984 as part of its review of the security problems of small states (Blacker 1985). This was the first time that Pacific Island nation-states had ever specifically addressed security questions. While the participants resisted any move towards security arrangements involving intervention in internal affairs, it was nevertheless an important occasion. It began the process of consideration of regional 'stability' and security by small states.

The more important impact of the new thinking, especially in terms of increasing the foundation for possible future collective intervention in internal security matters, was in Western capitals. Arguably, the more distant the capital the more appealing the new generalizations about small state security (Siaguru 1989:160-169). For such policy-makers, small states became a priority security problem. The bottom line was that they were a problem that needed management if they were not to upset 'the central balance', or more particularly, Western interests. These new attitudes could predispose outside actors to see a region of potential crisis and to see a necessity for management strategies. These strategies ranged from exploiting small states dependency status (Firth 1989), to incrementally redefining sovereignty (Herr 1988), to outright great power intervention (Alford 1984).

The emergence of this new thinking about small state security in general coincided with a number of particular developments in the Pacific which seemed at least to Western security analysts, to confirm the 'small is dangerous' thesis. These developments began in 1984 with the troubles in New Caledonia following the boycott of the Assembly elections by the *Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak et*

Socialiste. More important in terms of Western perceptions of an emergent regional instability, however, was what followed in 1985-86: the Soviet fishing agreement with Kiribati; the Soviet offer of fishing agreements to other island governments, which was taken up by Vanuatu; Gorbachev's Vladivostock speech; the Soviet naval buildup in the North Pacific; and the Libyan connection with groups and individuals in New Caledonia and Vanuatu. These developments were seen as constituting Soviet and Libyan threats to regional security (Tanham 1988).

Viewed against the backdrop of the ANZUS crisis of 1984-1985, the dominant outside perception quickly became one of a region that posed a potential security problem for the first time since the Second World War. The problem was seen to be externally-generated: a combination of Soviet opportunism, Libyan meddling, and the ANZUS crisis. The island states themselves were viewed as manipulable and vulnerable pawns in a great-power game (Sutherland 1988:123).

Pacific Islanders' perspective of

~~Viewing~~ the 'security problem', ~~from the Pacific Islanders perspective~~ though, is entirely different. The decolonization of the Pacific Islands began in 1962 with the independence of Western Samoa from New Zealand. The next twenty-five years saw the emergence of nine independent sovereign states, and four states that are self-governing in 'association' with their former administering powers. In general, the Pacific Islands escaped the violent transition that occurred in Africa. The colonial inheritance in the Pacific was far less combustible than elsewhere. Until the Fiji military *coup* in May 1987, the record of political stability in the new states of the Pacific region had been good. There was little political conflict and disorder, no impositions of one-party rule and no unilateral changes to the constitution to entrench a particular leadership in power (Zolberg 1968).

In contrast, Pacific Island nation-state governments have been changed regularly and in constitutional fashion. There has been only one extra-constitutional group which overthrew a government. Elsewhere in the region, most dissent and opposition occurred within the political framework, and the delivery of government services and the performance of governments generally has been reasonably

efficient. The transition of independence in all states but with the important exception of Vanuatu in 1980 (where a condominium colonial structure and an obstructionist French administration ruined the process), has been handled relatively smoothly. Subsequently, there have been few recriminations between new island states and former colonial powers.

The Fiji *coup*, which saw Lt. Colonel Rabuka overthrow the democratically elected coalition government of the Fiji Labor Party and the Indo-Fijian backed National Federation Party, has dented the South Pacific's reputation for stability (Saffu 1989). While the determinants of Lt. Colonel Rabuka's action was country-specific, it was unfortunately viewed by many as an indicator of the entire region's 'security problems'. Even though the country has attempted to internally resolve the dissent and opposition within its own cultural parameters, security analysts and policy-makers outside the region used the coup to highlight, in a extreme way, the perceived political turbulence and instability in the region (Robertson 1988). Recently, in Papua New Guinea, the violence and the threat of succession on the copper-rich North Solomons (Bougainville) Province has been used to reinforce the prevailing views of the region, and small island states inherent instability (Hegarty 1989).

But these instances of readjustment of the artificially imposed political community in some Pacific Island nation-states are not confined to small states (Mendlowitz 1990). Imposed boundaries and geographically defined political communities are changing the world over. Is not then the whole international political community insecure? Of course there is considerable debate on this issue and not the focus of this paper. But it should be pointed out that in fact the Pacific Island region still enjoys a great deal of stability (Chaudery 1988: 31-39).

In fact, Pacific Islanders are defining their own regional post-Cold War security agenda in order to maintain that stability. The Pacific Island nation-states have adopted three important regional treaties that assert their independence on indigenous matters of concern: the Treaty on Fisheries Between the Governments of Certain Pacific Island States and the Government of the United States

in 1987; the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region in 1968, and; the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga) in 1985 (I.L.M. 1987 & New Zealand 1986). Outside analysts and policy-makers are realizing that these treaties coupled with other foreign policy initiatives have essentially transformed these 'microstates' into 'macro-ocean nations' (Cicin-Sain 1989:39).

These treaties, combined with other foreign policy initiatives by Pacific Islanders, have pressed the larger powers to become more sensitive to their indigenous concerns which have little or no relationship to traditional notions of military security (Siaguru 1989:19). The Pacific Islanders are frustrated at the attempts by the larger powers to derail the implementation of their own version of a 'security paradigm' upon which the energies of intraregional and extraregional actors should be focused. Pacific Islanders want to create an environment in which great powers recognize and fully respect the sovereign rights of each Pacific Island nation-state. Kiribati President Ieremia Tabai summarized Pacific Island security objectives in succinct terms: "What we want at the end of the day is basically what more developed countries want for their people: a happier and healthier life that in the long term can be sustained from our own resources (Tow 1988:186)."

Security, Small States and the Pacific Islands

There seems to be a common assumption that a major power seeks to fashion a new international environment in its own image; a regional power aspires to create a favorable regional environment; a minor power is restricted to the concern to preserve territorial integrity and political independence. Yet loss of actor control over the environment has occurred for all states in modern society (Morse 1976:87), and the relative power of participants moves in the direction of equalization in an interdependent system (Holl 1983:291). In today's interdependent world, no state, not even the most powerful, is able to function entirely independent from some external influence or constraint. What is happening today is that the international system has become more globally linked, regionally and sectorially. This results in small states becoming more integrated into the global system. This integration will create an environment of mutual reliance between large and small states (Dalby 1991:37).

Major powers tend to identify the world order with their own national security interest (Kratochwil 1989:119-141). One of the reasons for increased questioning of the present security structure for the Pacific Islands is the realization that the smaller states can differ in their definitions of the threat and in their choice of appropriate responses to contain and defuse the threat. The smaller states are also more likely to have a broader conception of security, stressing economic and normative interests as well as military threats (King 1991:45-64). One study showed that in responding to crises, 'great powers and superpowers were more prone to military responses while the weaker states tended toward non-violent behavior' (Wilkenfeld 1988:199), which supports an earlier study that major powers have engaged in conflict behavior to a greater extent than small states (Rummell 1979).

Nevertheless, the security concerns of small states are qualitatively different from ~~that~~ those of large states. Small states worry about economic viability and sovereignty, whereas larger states view security primarily as military prowess and capability. In the pre-nuclear age, smaller states could seek to dissuade attacks from major

powers by developing the capability to impose costs upon the major power that would exceed any anticipated gains. One of the by-products of the nuclear age has been to render defense by smaller states against nuclear attack, which can be kept militarily cost-free to the aggressor, physically impossible. Deterrence of nuclear weapon use in relations between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon states results from costs of the international normative system. The risk of nuclear attack on a non-nuclear state is virtually eliminated, and of conventional attack and invasion is considerably diluted in the prevailing norms of the 1980s, and likely to remain low int the foreseeable future. Where international society was once a consequence of the success and survival of states, today it is a condition (Jackson & Rosberg 1982:1-24).

Geographic location and size significantly contribute to the security of Pacific Island nation-state. According to the assessments of both New Zealand's and Australia's 1987 White Papers on Defence, 'the Australasian security environment is exceptionally benign' (Thakur 1987:890-897). It has been suggested that small island states show a tendency to concentrate their security forces on coastguard duties, giving first priority to the control of their exclusive economic zones and the prevention of drug trafficking and smuggling (Espindola 1987:73). This is very true of most Pacific Island nation-states whose largest military investment is in the Pacific Patrol Boats. (The boats in fact are heavily subsidized by Australia.) Other than being used for disaster and emergency relief, the boats primary function and role is enforcement of the island's exclusive economic zone. In addition, maintenance of a small armed force, or a police force can serve the symbolic purpose of expressing national identity. Indeed, it could be suggested that some Pacific Island nation-states are creating a distinct national identity by limiting costly armed forces and pursuing the role of unarmed honest broker in international affairs.

Size and strategic location are also a significant contribution towards explaining the Pacific Islanders crusade against nuclearism. The Pacific Island nation-states must occupy one of the most secure geopolitical environments in the world. Their size precludes the

development of an offensive military capacity of their own (Quester 1983; Alford 1984). But along with geographic location, size also precludes the development of an adequate defensive capability against all imaginable contingencies.

For most of their short history, this has led the Pacific Island nation-states to favor seeking the protection of a large and powerful friend: Australia primarily, but also the US and New Zealand (Herr 1986:16-22). But as the contingency of a direct invasion of the Pacific Island nation-states has become ever more remote, while the nuclear arsenals have continued to grow unchecked; as the strategies of deterrence began to sit uneasily alongside talks of winning or prevailing in a nuclear war; as scenarios of nuclear winter unfolded with their bleak messages for noncombatants far from nuclear theaters: the Pacific Islanders woke to the realization that the gravest and the most probable threat to their security lay in the risks of a breakdown in the nuclear peace (Hamel-Green 1991:59-84). Anything which the Pacific Islanders could do to ameliorate the risks was therefore the most direct contribution to their national security, not just idealistic thoughts divorced from calculations of national interest. Although the Treaty of Rarotonga may not eliminate all nuclear potential from the South Pacific, it does make a contribution to an increasing global push for denuclearization.

Three clusters of socio-cultural traits have been identified for small insular states: conservatism and tradition; managed intimacy; and a pervasive concern with autonomy (Lowenthal 1987). The intimacy fostered by the 'multiplex society of a small state' produces a sense of community which visitors find such an 'enchanting step back in time.' This has a triple potential relevance for the Pacific Island nation-states foreign policy. First, the tightness of community enables political participation and sense of civic efficacy which may help to explain the success of the campaign for a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific. Second, the smallness of Pacific Island countries has encouraged 'informal, somewhat domesticated relationships' in the Pacific regional setting (Boyce & Herr 1974:35). Third, small communities need to manage intimacy in order to dampen the risk of splits resulting in the destruction of society. That

is, the US by virtue of its large size can afford to engage in fractious politics constantly; the Pacific Island nation-states are more likely to search for political and social mechanisms of accommodation ('the Pacific Way').

Thus, the case of the Pacific Island nation-states anti-nuclear policies suggests that a fusion of regional security [as in the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Thakur 1987)] and general international security (for example in a Comprehensive Test Ban treaty), which recognizes common security and so dispenses with a system of spatial exclusion, is more likely to take place with smaller states than with larger ones. The nuclear revolution has 'highlighted the bankruptcy of the traditional approach to security as a zero sum game' (Hoffman 1988:9). National security provides the ideological underpinning of a system of states which is not capable any longer of guaranteeing either external security or internal welfare: peace and prosperity are increasingly dependent upon the interplay of exogenous variables. Much as nuclear weapons have drawn the fate of all peoples into their ever-widening ambits, with increasingly integrated relations of destruction and theories of nuclear exchange, so an expanding world economy has begun to make the daily economic activities of peoples around the world dependent upon increasingly integrated relations of production and patterns of exchange (Dalby 1991).

Alliances, Small States and the Pacific Islands

The 1938 Munich lesson of the unreliability of the security guarantee can lead to contradictory policy implications for smaller allies. In the Pacific Islands, there are many who view the ANZUS (Australia-New Zealand-United States Treaty) security umbrella as unreliable, then the premium imposed by being under that security umbrella (allowing nuclear activities to occur within the region) is a needless expense. From a theoretical point of view, the Pacific Islanders greatest interest lies in the fact that both supporters and opponents of being under the ANZUS umbrella frame their arguments in terms of the benefits or risks to the smaller states. Thus the pro-umbrella constituency is very much in line with the realist belief that small states security is a function of balance of power in the international states-system, and its policy ought to be to contribute to that security. A secondary -- but to some a primary -- theme is that for a small states like Pacific Island nation-states, resource constraints deny the possibility of developing a modern well-trained and well-equipped armed force of its own; the United States military link was most useful in solving the cost constraints of providing sufficient military capabilities. Opponents of the ANZUS umbrella base their case on the assumption that in a structural condition of multipolar disequilibrium, smaller states can best contribute to peace by easing tensions from outside the power struggles. Yet in a tense multipolar system, bloc leaders are likely to be less tolerant of independent-minded allies, while smaller partners may perceive the potentially destabilizing ricks of independent postures as exceeding the anticipated benefits.

The Pacific Island debate on the ANZUS umbrella suggests that neutrality is another possibility. The experiences of the two world wars indicate that neither alliances nor neutrality, with variant associated policies, can guarantee a small state against involvement in a larger-power war. Neutrality led to the disappearance for forty-five years of Lithuania; attack, occupation and restoration of Norway; attack without occupation of Finland; and non-belligerency of Sweden. Among other small and medium states that had chosen

alliance, Albania was engulfed by its protector Italy, Czechoslovakia abandoned by its guarantor France, and Poland guaranteed only to be abandoned by Britain (Rothstein 1977:117). Given the empirical evidence throughout human history concerning alliance behavior, it seems likely that the formulation of a national security doctrine underpins a choice made by personality characteristics of decision-makers as much as size, structural and geopolitical calculations.

In the coming years, for Pacific Island nation-states, as indeed for many other small states in comparable circumstances, a major item of continuing debate is going to be the mode of articulation between national security policies and the international order. Should they be aligned, semi-aligned, dealigned, non-aligned, or neutral?

There is no general theory of alliances that can explain the circumstances in which nations choose to be aligned, with whom, and for how long (Stein 1990). Nor is there a consensus in the literature on the merits of states aligning with larger protectors. Machiavelli believed that by choosing to remain neutral, a small state risked the enmity of larger powers while forfeiting a share in spoils of war. Furthermore, "the one who is not friendly will seek your neutrality, and he who is friendly to you will ask that you declare yourself with arms." Nevertheless his advice was that a prince must "never associate with someone more powerful than himself so as to attack others, except when necessity presses (Machiavelli 1985:89-90)."

The Correlates of War project concluded that "smaller nations without alliance ties tend to be aggressed upon more often (Jensen 1982:225)." Lack of alignment is a feasible strategy if the small state concerned is strategically irrelevant (that is, the central balance of power is insensitive to its alignment stance) and politically non-provocative (Rothstein 1977:33). Yet small state alignment with more powerful states can be globally destabilizing when the lesser powers 'accentuate existing power' imbalances by choosing to side with the stronger group of major powers (Fox 1979:187). One analyst has attempted to explain this apparent paradox of small states accentuating existing imbalances of power by suggesting that they join coalitions against imbalances of threat (Walt 1987). While

balance of power theory is constructed on the distribution of capabilities (population, economic capacity, military force), the balance of threat is constructed on the distribution of threats (capabilities, proximity, offensive power, and intentions).

But consider for example the so-called 'lesson of Munich.' Appeasement, according to conventional wisdom, only whets the appetite of would-be aggressors. But this lesson is peculiar to the major powers. From the point of view of smaller allies, the lessons of 1938 are different if equally important: major powers will sometimes sacrifice the interests of their wards at the altar of one another's expansionist ambitions rather than risk war if their own interests are not directly engaged. The policy lesson for small states is therefore quite different, namely not to put all their security eggs in the basket of an alliance with major powers.

One could seek to explain the Pacific Island nation-states movement away from the umbrella of security provided by ANZUS, by arguing that new perceptions of threat have changed from previous perceptions of a potentially remilitarized Japan in the first instance, and from an expansionist and monolithic Soviet communist bloc in the second instance. The Pacific Islanders motivation was not to tilt the imbalance of power in the Western favor even further, but to redress the imbalance of threats to security in the Pacific (Dihm 1989:10-18). Japan is no longer regarded as a security risk and perceptions of a fragmenting Soviet Union are more benign. (This observation may have already become dated?) With no imbalance of threats to redress -- or alternatively, with the balance of probabilities suggesting that the only grave threat to Pacific Islanders security lies in the possible breakdown of the nuclear peace -- the Pacific Islanders are more sanguine about the necessities of the alliance umbrella (Thakur 1989:929-934).

Pacific Island nation-states are in some ways natural allies, with culture, traditions and language sharing the theme of 'the Pacific Way', but that to outsiders, all this may appear to be quite alien. The postwar ANZUS umbrella primarily assumed by the United States was not a product of any kind of kinship ties or socio-political affinity with the United States, but found some basis' in the geographical

isolation and historical trauma of the events of the Second World War. The ANZUS umbrella attempted to play up the notion on an insecure environment in the region, and eventually ingrain fears of vulnerability to some 'other threat.' The ANZUS umbrella was not provided as a result of some benevolent concern towards small states. Once the Pacific Island nation-states were included under the ANZUS umbrella, the United States began to calculate how best the small island states could contribute to the interests of the United States in order to retain the goodwill of the alliance leader. The status of smallness was an *ex post facto* justification for policies that took advantage of a particular people and leadership at a given time. The times have changed, the generations have changed, the leaders have changed, and so have perceptions of the world and national security interests (Jensen 1982:223).

This leads to another consideration. Smaller states ally with a major power either in the belief that the risk to independence from the protector itself is greater in an unaligned posture (that is, a hegemon is better appeased than irked), or because they fear the predatory designs of another major power. From a Pacific Islanders point of view, on balance, Australia and the US are similarly powerful in their relations with the Pacific Island nation-states, and comparable in their abilities to inflict conscious or unintended damage upon Pacific Island nation-states interests. However, in its relations with Australia, the US, and to a lessor extent New Zealand, the Pacific Island nation-states can also utilize the power of black mail or 'reverse potentiality' of the weak, as indeed they have done. In an asymmetric relationship, the weaker can call the tune by threatening to collapse unless supported by the protector; the stronger has no answering threat to return (Rothstein 1959:119)

Economics, Small States and the Pacific Islands

Under normal circumstances, the security problem can take an economic form for a small state much more readily than physical attack or conquest. Lack of a home market large enough to sustain self-sufficient economic growth leading to dependence on foreign markets is a problem common to small states. If for many realists foreign policy is national security policy, for Pacific Island nation-states it could be suggested that foreign policy is trade policy. For economic reasons, too, a small state will emphasize foreign over defense policy, and take recourse to foreign policy to make the international and regional environment as benign as possible. (Harden 1985).

There are three aspects to the relationship between the international economic system and its smaller members: external economic dependence, external sensitivity and foreign penetration. The first is measured by export or total trade as a proportion of GNP. Sensitivity, indicated by instability of export revenues, refers to the lack of frontier control against environmental disturbances which generate internal instabilities. Foreign penetration describes a situation where the effectiveness of national policy instruments to control outcomes has been significantly reduced under pressure from outside influences (Vogel 1983:54-68).

Dependence, sensitivity and penetration are not entirely structurally determined. One volitional strategy to reduce external sensitivity is concentrating on foreign economic policy to the neglect of other foreign policy issues. The involvement of economic bureaucracies and the utilization of economic techniques of statecraft have found to be three times more frequent in the foreign policy of small states than in that of large states (East 1973:574) . This is combined with managerial bargaining patterns in the decision-making process between the government and export-oriented groups in the private sector (Vogel 1983:62) Thus, in a number of Pacific Island nation-states their exist several public bodies engaged in trade promotion activities, such as the various producer boards and

export marketing authorities, which among other things resolve divergent interests in foreign economic policy affairs.

The trade policies of the smaller countries cannot realistically be isolated from international finance and monetary policy, and the behavior of their export prices is largely a function of international supply and demand factors. Exports of primary products in particular -- still the staple Pacific Island nation-state export -- fluctuates cyclically in response to exogenous determinants. The debt crisis, the global recession and global stock market instability have major repercussions on the national economies of Pacific Island nation-state. Structural changes in the world economy and intensifying inter-dependence, not just between countries, but economic sectors as well, have brought about a convergence of interests for such 'rival' multilateral organizations as GATT and UNCTAD. This is best exemplified for Fiji in the Cairns Group of agricultural free traders formed in August 1986, whose composition bridges the old world/new world, East/West, and North/South divides (Kakazu 1986).

In addition to the market dependency of the preceding paragraph, there is also economic power dependency wherein a state's economy is conditioned by the decision-making power of individuals or firms in capitalist centers. Pacific Island nation-states are asymmetrically dependent on the core in commerce, finance and technology (Connell 1991). They have to learn to cope with an international economic environment in which the old rules of the game appear to be changing; there is rapid and radical deregulation of financial markets all around the world; national economies are increasingly internationalized; and the international production structure approximates the global factory ever more closely with decentralized production but centralized control and management. In such an environment, small states like the Pacific Islands are attempting to secure a product or service niche, e.g. foreign vessel registry or offshore banking, as strategies of adaptation and survival.

Relative smallness does confer at least one important advantage. Smaller players can get away with behavior which if reproduced by the major actors would wreck any collective system

of exchange; that is, as in alliances, smaller states can to some extent treat the benefits of the system as a public good and enjoy a 'free ride' (Selwyn 1975). An example of this is how transportation for the Pacific Islands interstate commerce was in essence subsidized for years by their geographical location in the trans-oceanic trade route between continents.

Small states have small home markets, narrow band of resources, and limited opportunities for diversified economies. They therefore concentrate efforts on specializing in a limited range of products and attempt to satisfy consumption demands of their own citizens through imports, which in turn must be paid through exports. Consequently, smaller states are said to be relatively more dependent on foreign trade than large states. The economic constraints on the supply side concern land, labor capital and entrepreneurship, and on the demand side, limited and narrow domestic market, and 'a limited export-cum-diverse import external market' (Ward 1975).

Not only is the small-state economy said to be excessively dependent on foreign trade, with its own rate of growth a function of the rate of growth of exports of goods and services; in addition, the fact of narrow export items and diverse import goods takes away capacity to exert influence over price and quotas in international markets. But frontier protection of national economies is simpler through a more easily manipulable customs regime, and therefore import-substitution policies are more tempting. Nevertheless, a small domestic market imposes severe limits on the scope of import substitution, and so constricts the process of balanced growth through export stimulation and import substitution. Small states have a higher degree of concentration in the commodity composition of exports and a broader expanse in the manufactured composition of imports. That is, small states specialize in exports but generalize in imports. (Demas 1976).

Size of a country may shape, but does not necessarily determine trade ratios, commodity and geographic concentration of exports. Size as an explanatory factor in isolation would be unable to cope with the different responses Denmark ans Norway to European

Community membership. The significance of size may be subordinate to historical legacies, location, market access, currency values, labor productivity, and other factors, even though smaller states are clearly more vulnerable and exposed to shifts in international economic equations, and so may face greater difficulties in implementing the right policy mix for the achievement of multiple objectives (e.g. economic growth and balance of payments stability) (Lloyd 1968).

Structure constrains, power enables; does small size denote inability to resist structural pressures? Structural power, understood as the ability to shape the operating environment of other actors, has been held to be the key to understanding outcomes (Strange 1988). Small states can be said to possess the most constrained opportunity sets. But while the environment defines the context of state behavior, how a state actually copes with its environment is not determined by the latter.

The need to have predictable concessional resources and assured markets has led many small states to seek and maintain economic cooperation arrangements with larger states. The larger states themselves may have strategic and commercial interests in such arrangements. Such bilateral or regional arrangements have significant importance to the development of small states (Fairbairn 1985:241-254). The South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA), is an example of such an an arrangement. In establishing SPARTECA, Pacific Island nation-states attempted to try and increase their trading opportunities within regional and international constraints, and to stabilize part of their trading environment. For the island nation-states, SPARTECA was an effort to reduce environmental uncertainty.

It has been argued that the international economic system is characterized by rapid and far-reaching restructuring which has increased the national vulnerability of a large number of small countries (Hveem 1987:193-208). (Vulnerability refers to costs incurred even after attempted adaptation to environmental changes which are either systemic, or policy changes in the actions or other actors in the system.) Small states are more affected by economic-

systemic variables than large states are (Jensen 1982:262). The postwar free trade order is held to have been dependent on United States hegemony, with the United States being very influential in the creation, operation and maintenance of the system. It has been suggested that because the system was dependent upon one economic power assuming the cost of governing it, it broke down as the United States lost its hegemonic position under challenge from the European Economic Community and Japan (Gilpin 1981). But it is by no means clear that the relative military and financial powers of the United States have declined alongside its market power (Russett 1985:207-282). The United States accounts for more than one-fifth of global military expenditures and economic product, and is likely to remain the most powerful state in the world for some time yet (Nye 1988:105-129). An alternative argument asserts that the system was intentionally one of conditional free trade or 'embedded liberalism' (Ruggie 1982:379-415). In any case, a less predictable international economic environment means less market access and more competition for market shares for Pacific Island nation-states, and surplus capacity in their agricultural export items.

The interdependence perspective offers the possibility of cooperative strategies through integration or policy coordination, although this is not easy if states are unequally vulnerable, and unequally capable of coping with vulnerability. Increasing and more complex (because of more actors, issues and interactions) economic interdependence in the age of an integrated world economy has put domestic social and economic policies at the mercy of external forces. For the smaller states in the existing international order built upon unstoppable nuclear weapons and penetrated national economies, sovereignty has been reduced to mean the authority to choose how best to cope with the outside penetrations, opportunities and constraints. The recognition of the multilateral nature of the SPARTECA agreement reflected a wider reality that long-term mutuality of interests in conditions of economic interdependence need to be insulated from disruptive temptations to engage in short-term zero sum games that exploit uneven economic and social distributions.

SPARTECA also illustrates some of the interesting ways in which the business of international relations has changed in recent decades. In the classical interstate system, foreign policy used to consist of the high politics of security and national interests. In today's world of complex and multi-dimensional interdependence, foreign policy for the smaller states is as likely to be grappling with the low politics of equal access to materials and reciprocity of trade concessions. As a corollary, where orthodox diplomacy emphasized secretiveness and manipulation, contemporary diplomacy is often an extension of national decision-making processes into the international arena in order to cope with political and economic problems that refuse to respect national frontiers. Negotiation therefore between countries of the Pacific have moved away from classical diplomacy to resemble instead the art of managing growing bureaucracies (Vogel 1983).

Opposition to SPARTECA was expressed in the form of an argument that integration with Australia and New Zealand would merely entrench Pacific Island nation-states more firmly than ever into a structurally subordinate position within the world economy. The counter to this argument is that given the reality of external economic dependence, sectoral diversification of dependence is a sensible mode of adaptation. Whether agreements such as SPARTECA fully protect the interest of small states without compromising their security and their regional and wider economic interests is left to further study.

Diplomacy, Small States and the Pacific Islands

Constraints on the international behavior of small states are less pronounced in the political-diplomatic sphere than in the military and economic. There is a correspondingly larger universe of small state foreign political behavior available for systematic analysis. Governments of small countries, it has been hypothesized, tend to be risk-avoiders (Selwyn 1975:8-24); but another study found small states to engage in high-risk behavior (East 1973). The scope for foreign policy to be influenced by belief systems of political leaders is said to be greater in small states than large ones (Mulhall 1986:11-15). Bureaucratic points of resistance to policy modifications or policy overhauls are neither as numerous nor as formidable. Small states engage in limited diplomatic representation, restricted to places they believe their major external interests to lie, and emphasizing geographical and functional areas (Wiberg 1987). If size-based resource constraints act to limit Pacific Island nation-states internationalism, then it is also true that their isolation from the main centers of international relations has led them into policies of cultivating external ties to counteract geographic distance.

The political conditions in the decade after the First World War are said to have favoured both the security of small states and their opportunity to play constructive roles in Euro-centered world politics (Fox 1969:751-764). A study of small state behavior in the League of Nations had already noted that the commonality of their interests as small states was insufficiently strong to sustain coalescent behavior in the organization (Rappard 1934:544-575). Another study noted that small states were no less prone to behave selfishly and irresponsibly as members of international organizations than great powers (Liska 1957). An analysis of the Pacific-Island nation-states behavior at the United Nations would show that political alignment was a better predictor of the Pacific Island nation-states policy in the organization than size. Indeed one's impression is that political alignments provide a more reliable explanation of United Nations behavior of nations in general than their size; that is, there is more likely to be a measurable degree of cohesion within Western,

Eastern, and nonaligned groupings, or North/South countries, rather than in major, medium and small power clusters.

Small, middle and large powers are said to differ in the use they make of international organizations as instruments of interest aggregation and legitimization (Kams & Mingst 1987:454-474). Lacking the resources to engage in punishment and reward behavior, they fall back upon the tools of protest, persuasion, and recognition (Boyce 1977). As standing multilateral conferences, international organizations offer Pacific Island nation-states forums in which to maximize their international influence without having to expend scarce resources on traditional bilateral diplomacy with every independent actor in world affairs. Small states are traditionally regarded as being strong supporters of international law and international organizations, which are seen as their best safeguard for long-term security. Economic international organizations are crucial centers of action and decision-making in the interdependent system; the United Nations is the crucial organization for generating international norms, and the sole 'authoritative legitimator' of world order (Hermann 1987).

International organizations provide the framework within which small states can build coalitions and pursue collective bargaining. This is particularly important in issues on which there is stiff opposition from one or more major powers, as happened with the Law of the Sea (Mizukami 1991:111-121). The United Nations framework was indispensable for the Pacific Island nation-states in the negotiation and conclusion of this regime, which lends further plausibility to the claim that a coalition of the weak can have some influence over 'non-hegemonic regime-creation', if that coalition maintains sufficient unity and if it follows an appropriate bargaining strategy (Rothstein 1984:326).

Major powers have the greatest capacity to disturb international order. They have the greatest capacity to disturb that order as well as to defend it against challenges from the territorial, political and economic revisionists; and the greatest to lose if the defense fails. One of the reasons for the power of veto of the permanent members in the United Nations Security Council was that the major powers would bear

the brunt of the military burden of international enforcement of the collective peace by the United Nations. In practice, with peacekeeping the characteristic United Nations operation, the military burden has fallen typically on all states but the major powers. Fears that superpower involvement in local conflicts would exacerbate instead of ameliorating crises were amply borne out by the Multinational Force in both Beirut and the Gulf War. Contingents from non-great powers are less likely to fuel suspicions of furthering national objectives antithetical to international duties and ensure an easier chain of authority from the United Nations commander, while permitting the smaller members of the international community to play a role in the maintenance of world peace (Jensen 1982:223). Fiji is a frequent contributor to international peacekeeping and Papua New Guinea has proposed becoming involved in peacekeeping in Cambodia.

Small states often cling to the hope that the United Nations can make an indirect contribution to their security by providing at least minimal or occasional protection against the illegitimate claims of predatory powers. The United Nations can also provide a 'global bridge' across which the governments of small states involved in disputes with major powers can retire to safety, and a 'lightening rod' for deflecting and burying the more violent political reactions at home to concessions abroad at the altar of power realities (Indorf 1986). Mediation in international disputes is a recourse of the lessor rather than the bigger powers (Jenson 1982:223).

Smaller states face a peculiar dilemma in international organizations between the competing pulls of efficacy and equality. To be effective, an international organization like the United Nations would need to abandon the consensual approach in the plural General Assembly for a centralization of authority in the Security Council as its executive organ. But the Assembly more than the Council is the organ of lesser powers. The dilemma confronted the small states during negotiations to set up the United Nations, when 'lesser states were never sure whether they should be more frightened of great power solidarity or of great power conflict' (Claude 1964:56).

Some international economic institutions have voting weights correlated more precisely to size than do their political counterparts.

Small states have little influence over, and therefore also little responsibility for the viability of the international economic system. They are passive if not exploited participants in the regulation of the international economic system. This has been brought home most forcefully to Pacific Islanders with the repeated threats of agricultural warfare between the United State and the European Community, which would cause measurable-to-substantial damage to the main antagonists but could prove fatal for the bystanders. In the political organs of international organizations, small states like the Pacific Islands have co-equal roles to play in norm-generation and regime-creation. In international economic exchanges, however, they are 'price-takers' with marginal influence on the rules which regulate international commerce.

Small State Influence on Larger States?

The relationship between power and influence finds little agreement among scholars (Sullivan 1990, Franck 1990). It is also a truism of our times that the possession of power is a lot easier than its exercise. The power to compel is rather different from the power to deter. Power is pervasive, ubiquitous, multidimensional. It is also elusive, relational, perceptual, and issue-specific (Stoll & Ward 1989). Thus on the nuclear issue, regardless of smaller size -- indeed to some extent helped by small size -- the Pacific Island nation-states have been (i) virtually immune to threats from the United States; (ii) in a position to influence Australia and New Zealand more than be pressured by those governments; (iii) able to make some impact on the nuclear proliferation potential throughout the Pacific; and (iv) and able to exercise a measure of influence internationally completely out of proportion to its military and economic resources.

Innovation is held to be the key to the prosperity and survival of most private firms. Similarly, innovation may hold the key to continued survival of nations. Ideas are not rank-dependent: isolated and exceptionally secure states like Pacific Islands may in fact be better able to break free of historical cobwebs in reconceptualizing security concerns and survival strategies. Major powers in any international system are foremost *status quo* actors, for the existing order perpetuates their privileged positions of inequality (Clark 1989). The distinctive thing about the modern states-system is that smaller states too have been drawn into the ranks of the *status quo* powers because the present world order preserves the fiction of legal equality.

Major power-small states inequalities however is fact. The Pacific Island nation-states are unlikely to ever exercise decisive influence over the policies of the great powers. Instead, they can at best hope to shape the environment in which great power policies are pursued through both quiet and public diplomacy.

For adherents of the school of quiet diplomacy, a small Western ally can make a dual contribution towards easing world tensions. It can try to explain and justify United States policy to others, and it

can simultaneously try to exercise a moderating influence upon United States leaders. But in order to do the latter, it is necessary to retain the friendship of the major Western powers, and to make sure that advice is tendered in a restrained, responsible and constructive manner. It is difficult for any government, let alone that of a superpower, to be seen to change its policy in response to public pressure from a foreign government. Smaller allies can urge military caution and diplomatic flexibility.

Engagement in an interdependent world offers opportunities for influence and leadership to states like the Pacific Islands in shaping world order as exemplified by their lead in bringing attention to the effects of global warming. Influence may be described as the ability to affect the behavior of an external actor without resort to superior military or economic strength. In order to achieve success in exercising influence, a state requires 'an outward-looking orientation, cross-cultural empathy, diplomatic skill, congruence between verbal projection and actual conduct' (Knorr 1975: 316). As the great powers' role in nurturing and sustaining world order has subverted by nuclear weapons acquisitive behavior to become grossly irresponsible (Bull 1980:437-447), the lesser powers searched for ways and means of directing the superpowers back to the path of responsibility.

The bargaining position of small states vis-a-vis large states is not necessarily unfavorable. Major powers have global interests and are required to process a number of foreign policy issues concurrently. Smaller states can afford to concentrate their energies on a single issue, which may be of fundamental importance to them but relatively unimportant to larger states with crowded foreign policy agendas. The smaller state may be prepared to play for correspondingly higher stakes, whereas the larger state would be proportionately risk-averse on a less significant issue. A weak state near destitution can play off the fears of larger states of a power vacuum consequent upon collapse, and windows of opportunity presented to actual or potential adversaries for filling the vacuum (Miller 1986: 70-93).

The smaller state can also benefit from a more cohesive and centralized foreign policy bureaucracy and exploit the larger size and pluralistic fragmentation of such complex decision-making structures as that of the United States or Australia: military and economic strengths of size become diplomatic liabilities, and constraints become assets. Smaller states can sometimes have higher tolerance level for sacrifices deemed necessary to achieve national goals. Smaller states can mobilize public opinion more readily against appearance of pressure from the larger state, or to enable them to engage in a more vigorous pursuit of their case because it is more highly politicized in their home constituencies; or else public opinion in the smaller states can box a government into greater rigidity than the officials might wish (Alagappa 1987:15-31).

Yet on military issues the bargaining position of the smaller states is decidedly weaker. It lacks the resources and facilities of the major power to collect, collate, store and retrieve military assessments; on issues of national security, the major power is more likely to be determined on its own course of action, and irritated at obstructionist smaller states (Spiegel 1971:375-96; Nye 1974:961-96). More subtly, regular and special intelligence briefing by the larger states can help to mould the world-views of smaller allies towards conformity with the international images dominant in the larger state's policy-making hierarchy. But in a conflict situation, the equation is again different (Mack 1975:175-200). The conflict can be total and hence unifying for the smaller state, but marginal and domestically divisive for the intervening great power.

In relations with the South Pacific, Australia, New Zealand and the US are the potentially coercive powers. They instituted selective and limited sanctions as a mark of disapproval of military rule in Fiji in 1987 (Wood 1989:31-34). But in this relationship all the limitations of sanctions as an instrument of coercive statecraft -- impossibility of securing universal, comprehensive, and mandatory sanctions; ready availability of alternative sellers; profits of evading sanctions exceeding gains of policing them; economic damage to sanctions-imposing countries and to innocent parties in target countries -- offset the impact of limited and half-hearted measures applied against post-coup Fiji by

Australia, New Zealand and the United States. So small states are not always vulnerable to economic pressure from larger powers with whom most of their relations take place.

Regional cooperation is frequently cited as one possible solution to the 'problem' of smallness, leading to the creation of common markets, sharing of specialized services and the deployment of collective bargaining power (Neemia 1986). The South Pacific Forum was set up in 1971 as the symbol and instrument of regional decision-making. Australia and New Zealand were invited to join in recognition of their geographical and historical links with the Pacific Island nation-states. In a political and institutional sense, relationships in the South Pacific Forum are those of equals.

The South Pacific Forum is seen as providing its member-states a 'regional voice' by creating the institutional mechanisms and diplomatic weight required to derive bargaining advantages against outside actors. (Pacific Island nation-state elite also view good regionalism as good domestic politics. Attendance at annual Forum gatherings affords them an image of statesmanship that enhances their political standing at home.) Most importantly, the assertion of indigenous Pacific values and control over various aspects of the regional security agenda can be regarded as an important symbol of the Pacific Islanders overall determination to build greater autonomy and self-determination against competing interests of outside powers (Stephenson 1990:110-114)

Pacific Islanders are not essentially caught in a tide of events not of their own making -- "unable to get far ahead of waves caused by larger actors in world affairs, to stand still in the current of events, or to resist the undertow (Fry 1991:394-400)." Nor are they small inhabitants of a 'quiet backwater', with the tide of global development passing them by. Pacific Islanders are developing the means by which, and the commitment with which to monitor and to influence global events, while at the same time connecting global issues and major international actors.

CONCLUSION

Size, it has been argued, is "an important factor underlying variations in the international behavior of nation-states; small states as a class tend to differ from large states in their foreign policy behavior (East 1973:556)." By contrast, I have attempted to show the limitations of past small state theory by means of a critical review of the literature, and an empirical demonstration of how 'small' as an independent variable fails to account especially for the security, economic, and political dimensions of Pacific Island nation-states foreign policies.

More than two decades ago, International Relations analysts rarely explicated internal and external factors as casual agents, let alone weight them or specify the relationship between them (Rosenau 1966:27-92). In the absence of general theories, foreign policy analyses had remained largely historical and single-country oriented. Theories of foreign policy would hypothesize the manner in which the various internal and external factors combined under different, but specified, circumstances; and operationalize the hypotheses with a view to testing them in order that they could be confirmed or refuted as valid generalizations.

Unfortunately, as we have seen, at times such hypotheses between state size and foreign policy behavior contradict one another. For example: about small states being risk-prone or risk-averse; about small size and geographical isolation--the 'tyranny of distance' -- being a factor promoting or inhibiting alignment; about alliance umbrellas maximizing independence of action by solving the security dilemma, or maximizing dependency and constricting freedom of action through strategically irrelevant entanglements; of tension in a binuclear system leading to coercive assertions of bloc leaders' authority to constrict small state freedom, or safeguarding small state security through mutual deterrence and prevention of superpower condominium.

Insofar as small states at least are concerned, International Relations remains 'pre-theoretic' (Ferguson & Mansbach 1988), first, because of the elusiveness of the concept of the small state; second,

because of the lack of studies of the relationship between the independent variable of small size and the dependent variable of small state foreign policy behavior; third, because of the lack of cumulation in the studies of the international behavior of small states; and fourth, because of the lack of incorporation of the size factor into a dynamic theoretical model which integrates different explanatory variables with precise weighting and specified relationships.

Let us assume that a-z represents the entire range of state behavior in international relations. Three different levels of propositions can be postulated about small state behavior:

1. if, and only if, the actor is a small state, then behavior patterns a-i:
2. if small state, then behavior a-i; or
3. behavior a-i only if small state.

For the first proposition to be valid, every small state would exhibit the a-i range of behavior; all small state behavior would be within this range; and no state other than a small one would act within this range. We could then predict particular behavior from known size, or infer actor size from observed behavior.

The second proposition would mean that a small state's behavior was limited to the a-i range, but other classes of states could also engage in that behavior. If we knew the class of state, we could predict its behavior; but observing by itself would not permit any inference about the size of an actor. Contrariwise, the third type of proposition would mean that the a-i range of behavior was exhibited only by small states, but that small states were not limited to that range. Consequently, observed behavior would enable inferences to be drawn about actor size; but knowledge of the size of the state would not of itself allow us to predict its behavior.

Diluting our theoretical claim still further, we could shift from small state determinism to small state probabilism and postulate that most small states acted within the behavior range a-i most of the time. While this would be difficult to operationalize in a falsifiable form (so that just one contrary instance disproves the proposition), it

could at least be shown to be a statistical generalization. It would be theoretically messy, and would permit no application to individual states with any degree of confidence with regard to either size or behavior.

Yet the above survey shows even this anemic theory of small state behavior to be shaky. The best that we seem to be able to manage is small state possibilism: some small states behave in quasi-characteristic manner under certain conditions. Not all small states act in this way under these these conditions; not most small states act in this way under these conditions; not even one small state will always act in the same way under the same conditions. Structuralism has difficulty coping with difference and diversity; a single theory of small state behavior would require uniform behavioral responses to identical structural demands. The theoretical difficulties with size differentiated foreign policy behavior thus reflect that "in recent years the quest in international relations has become, if anything, increasingly elusive (Ferguson & Mansbach 1988:213)." It is possible to generalize cautiously about foreign policy characteristics of smaller states in multilateral alliances and organizations or asymmetric dyads, for example in regard to bargaining assets and outcomes; it is fallacious to extrapolate from these to a small state syndrome in foreign policy in general.

The insufficiency of the small state concept as an analytic tool is indicated also in respect of the obsession with small state viability: "the smaller the state the less viable it is (Vital 1969:3)." In the present international system, survival is not a problem for most South Pacific nation-states. With the security of a state not challenged, theories originating in the security dilemma cannot explain that state's behavior. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the focus of viability-oriented studies of small states shifted to island states: so viability was a problem in search of a root rather than a small state phenomenon. Yet the empirical record of the postwar era suggests that viability may be a big state problem. States artificially large because of historical accidents have struggled to maintain territorial integrity against assertions of sub-national identities. That

is, if the modern state faces more acute external threats because it is small, it also faces more acute internal threats because it is too large. And the world has become interdependent in such a way that the security and survival of nations anywhere have become hostage to policies and practices everywhere (Walker 1990).

Security has also begun to be conceptualized in increasingly broader terms, with subjects as ecological degradation, human rights abuses and the greenhouse effect beginning to intrude upon the consciousness of national security leaderships. Traditional larger states are not immune to the effects of extra-national forces in such non-military areas. Can the "delimitation of political space as discrete territorialities be regarded as adequate when the in-group/out-group dichotomies that they represent no longer describe the reality of international exchange? (Dalby 1991)" And if the states-system is itself going to be challenged, then investigating the logic of small state behavior in that system may become a somewhat irrelevant pursuit.

For all these reasons, it does not seem promising to take the concept of the small state as the departure for studying Pacific Island nation-states international relations. Many study the foreign policy of small states by attempting to investigate what modes and techniques of diplomacy best enable a small state to achieve its national objectives? But if they were to look closely at Pacific Island nation-states foreign policy experience, what would emerge is how important have been the personality and assumptions of any countries chief decision-maker of any given time.

This is not say that size can serve no explanatory purpose at all. Rather, the importance of size as an isolated explanatory factor should not be exaggerated: small countries are a heterogeneous group which do not have uniform behavioral characteristics and cannot be expected to respond in the same way to similar stimuli. The balance between structural and volitional components in explaining foreign policy behavior may well be different for large powers and small states, but it is unlikely that the same matrix will found to be operative for all small states. As a corollary, where the non-major powers react in different ways to similar external

conditions, for example, Vanuatu and Tonga nuclear policies -- or where incommensurate powers react in similar ways to different external conditions, for example Swiss and United States (19th century) policy of neutrality -- explanations must be sought beyond the variable of size, by incorporating such other factors across different levels of analysis as personality characteristics of individual decision-makers, internal political structures, geopolitical environments, and issue sensitivity. In short, small state theory is incompatible with Pacific Island nation-states reality: an adequate explanation of Pacific Island nation-states foreign policy and security requires the use of variables exogenous to the small state conceptual framework.

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